

In the specification:

Please replace Paragraph [0030] with the following amended paragraph:

[0030] Referring to blocks 104 and 105 of Figure 1, after the masking levels of noise of the plurality of near-end subband signals has been determined and/or estimated, subband amplification gains can then be determined. In one embodiment of the invention, the masking levels of noise of near-end subband signals (dB) are converted to sound pressure levels above the threshold of hearing audibility (dBN) using equations known by those of skill in the art. Then, subband amplification gains are determined by using various protocols, such as but not limited to using a fitting formula for correction of hearing loss, like the Fig. 6 protocol (see, Mead C. Killion & Selda Fikret-Pasa "The Three Types of Sensorineural Hearing Loss: Loudness and Intelligibility Considerations" The Hearing Journal, November 1993), the National Acoustics Laboratories' NAL-NL1 protocol, (see Dillon, H., "NAL-NL1: A new procedure for fitting non-linear hearing aids." The Hearing Journal; April 01, 1999), the Independent Hearing Aid Fitting Forum's protocol [first described August 14-17, 1994) "Independent Hearing Aid Fitting Forum's Comprehensive Hearing Aid Fitting Protocol for the 21st Century", Jackson Hole Rendezvous, Jackson Hole, WY and documented in Cox, R.M. (1995) "Using loudness data for hearing aid selection: The IHAF approach," Hearing Journal, 48(2), 10, p. 39 – 44 and Valente, M., and Van Vliet, D. (1997). The Independent Hearing Aid Fitting Forum (IHAF) Protocol. Trends in Amplification 2(1)], the Desired Sensation Level input/output (DSL [i/o]) protocol (see Cornelisse, L.E., Seewald, R.C., and Jamieson, D.G. (1995). The input/output (i/o) formula: A theoretical approach to the fitting of personal amplification devices. Journal of the Acoustical Society of America, 97(3): 1854-64), or the Cambridge protocol (see, Moore, B.C.J., Alcantara, J.I., Stone, M.A., and Glasberg, B.R.: "Use of a loudness model for hearing aid fitting: II. Hearing aids with multi-channel compression" British Journal of Audiology, (1999) Vol 33, pp. 157 - 170), and Moore, B.C.J.: "Use of a loudness model for hearing aid fitting. IV. Fitting hearing aids with multi-channel compression so as to restore "normal" loudness for speech at different levels" British Journal of Audiology, (2000) Vol 34, pp. 165 - 177).